

Message Text

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45

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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TAGS: PFOR, FR, CB

SUBJECT: SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS EDITORIAL ON POSSIBILITY OF FRENCH
MEDIATION

REFS: (A) PHNOM PENH 16219

(B) PHNOM PENH 16869

1. THE FRENCH LANGUAGE DAILY PAPER "LE REPUBLICAIN" PUBLISHED
ON JANUARY 8 AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "IS FRENCH MEDIATION POSSIBLE?"
FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION:

BEGIN TEXT

"DURING A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, THE PRESIDENT
OF THE FRENCH
REPUBLIC ADDRESSED A FRATERNAL GREETING TO THE KHMER
PEOPLE, WHO ARE LINKED TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE BY A LONG COMMON
HISTORY. DURING
THE COURSE OF THE FORD-D'ESTAING MEETING IN
MARTINIQUE, THE KHMER QUESTION WAS ALSO TAKEN UP. IT REMAINS
TO BE SEEN WHAT ROLE FRANCE, WHICH VOTED TO ABSTAIN DURING THE
LAST UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HAS PLAYED AND INTENDS TO
PLAY. FRANCE, BY ITS VOTE, SEEMS TO WANT TO REMAIN
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UNCOMMITTED TO EITHER OF THE TWO CONTENDING PARTIES

AND, IF NEEDED, WOULD NOT REFUSE THE ROLE OF MEDIATOR,
A COMMENDABLE POSITION WE APPLAUD.

"HAS FRANCE ALREADY SOUNDED OUT THE INTENTIONS OF THE
OTHER SIDE? IF SO, WHAT WAS THE RESULT? WE WOULD LIKE
TO KNOW, BECAUSE THE MATTER IS URGENT.

"BUT FRANCE IS NOT ALONE IN THIS MATTER. OTHER GREAT
POWERS HAVE ENTERED THE LISTS, AND ASK NO MORE THAN TO
BE ABLE TO HELP US. IT WOULD THEREFORE BE IN PARIS'
INTEREST TO MOVE SWIFTLY TO EARN OUR GRATITUDE.

"MEANWHILE, THE WAR CONTINUES WITH ITS PROCESSION OF
SORROW AND UNHAPPINESS. THE OTHER SIDE IS VAINLY SEEK-
ING A MILITARY VICTORY FROM THE CURRENT CONFRONTATION.

AND IT IS CERTAIN THAT THE KHMER REPUBLIC, ONCE MORE,
WILL EMERGE FROM THE GENERAL ENEMY OFFENSIVE INTACT
AND WILL CONTINUE TO HOPE FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION.

BUT PEACE IS NOT YET IN SIGHT AND MEANWHILE PUBLIC
OPINION IS PREOCCUPIED BY THE DIFFICULTY OF ALL ASPECTS
OF EXISTENCE.

"IT IS THEREFORE UP TO M. GISCARD D'ESTAING TO MAKE
GOOD ON HIS PROMISE BY AIDING THE KHMER PEOPLE TO RE-
COVER PEACE IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME. END TEXT

2. COMMENT: "LE REPUBLICAIN" IS A SEMI-OFFICIAL PUBLI-
CATION WHICH RECEIVES GKR FUNDS TO OPERATE AND WHICH
RECEIVES MUCH DIRECT PERSONAL SUPERVISION FROM THE
MINISTER OF INFORMATION. THE THRUST OF THE EDITORIAL
IS CLEAR: THE GKR WOULD WELCOME A FRENCH MEDIATION,
THE SOONER, THE BETTER.

DEAN

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